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Keeping “On Task”: An Exploration of Task Cohesion In Diverse Military Teams

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ABSTRACT

Military teams (e.g., combat teams, training teams, and quality teams) that have diverse and crossfunctional membership face a basic dilemma. Such diversity produces a greater range of perspectives and problem solving approaches, but at the same time decreases cohesiveness in the team. Cohesiveness historically has been examined in social terms (e.g., common interests and attitudes). Given the problems with cohesiveness, this report examines an alternative approach -- task cohesion (i.e., building team cohesion based upon the task rather than social aspects of the team). Theoretical bases of task cohesion as well as empirical findings are discussed. Recommendations for enhancing task cohesion in military teams are explored.

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